

## **Keychain AutoUnlock**

by Jason Giles

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### **What Is It?**

This mini-utility will automatically unlock your keychain on system startup. It will also unlock it whenever you run the application. It's quite handy for those of us who love the keychain, but hate the fact that every time we restart or boot-up, we must unlock it first before it can be used (of course, this is defeating the whole purpose of security... oh well!).

You will need MacOS 9 (with the Keychain installed and active) to make use of this application.

### **What's New?**

Version 1.2: Added the deluxe "how to" instructions below in the "How Do I Use It?" section. Added a new feature to "always prompt" on startup. Yes, this sort of defeats the purpose of having it auto-unlock, but it is useful for certain software configurations, where the keychain screws up by trying to open certain servers before other software is setup correctly on startup. Most people will not want this feature, and they should just leave it off.

Version 1.1.1: The Version 1.1 workaround had the unfortunate affect of opening the "Aliases" Folder every time you started your computer. So, the new location for servers you wish to mount at startup is in the System Folder (at the same level as the Startup Items folder), and it must be named "Startup Servers".

Version 1.1 adds the ability to mount servers after Keychain AutoUnlock runs. There is a "bug" or "feature" in the Finder that causes aliases to servers in the Startup Items folder to always get opened first. Therefore, this app always runs after, causing the finder to prompt you to enter your password for the volumes you have aliases. This defeats one use of the app, so this version provides a workaround for this problem. See how to use this feature below.

### **How Do I Use It?**

Simply place the application anywhere on your hard disk. Run it, and the first time you run it will ask you to enter the password for your default keychain. Once you've clicked OK, it will attempt to unlock the keychain. If it is successful, it will store an alias to itself in the Startup Items folder. From then on, every time the system is rebooted, the app will run and unlock the keychain without intervention from you.

To disable the auto-unlock, simply remove the alias in the Startup Items folder of your System Folder. If you want to disable the auto-login before startup, use the Extensions Manager Control Panel (hold down the Space Bar while the system boots).

To change the password the application uses, hold down the Command Key and double click the application. The password dialog should reappear, and allow you to change it.

To Auto-Mount Servers in your Startup items folder: you can have servers automatically mounted on startup. Simply create a folder named "Startup Servers" (it must match that EXACTLY, it is case sensitive) in your System Folder folder, and put any aliases to any servers you wish to auto-mount in this folder. On startup, KA will scan this folder, mounting any server aliases it finds.

In case you are lost or can't seem to get it to work, here are more detailed instructions on how to use KA:

(0) IF you have a password to a server that does not have any characters in it (you just type your name and hit "Connect" in the login dialog), then THIS WILL NOT WORK FOR YOU -- you need to have a non-empty server password to use the keychain (I think this is a Keychain Access bug, personally). It is OK to have an empty password for your keychain.

(1) Open the Keychain Access Control Panel

(2) Create a new keychain.

(3) Unlock the keychain, if it is not.

(4) Via the chooser, mount the servers you wish to auto-mount. DO NOT use the "Add to Keychain" checkbox -- there is some funniness with this checkbox, and I'm not sure it always works. Since you don't want to do this more than once, don't check this box (we'll add them later).

(5) Drag each one into your keychain window, entering the passwords as they are requested.

- (6) In the Edit menu, choose the "<your keychain name> Settings..." menu item. Enter your password to get into the preferences when prompted.
- (7) In the Preferences dialog, click the "Allow Access Without Warning" checkbox. A dialog will appear "Are you sure you want to turn off warnings when your keychain is accessed?". Click YES. Then click "Save" to close the preferences dialog.
- (8) Close the Keychain Access dialog.
- (9) Unmount all servers. DO NOT restart yet.
- (10) Perform a test: Go to the "Recent Servers" menu under the Apple menu, and select a server you just had mounted.
- (a) Did it mount without asking you? If so, proceed to step (10).
- (b) if the server prompted you for a password, either you did not perform the steps above in the right order, your keychain is locked, or you have an empty server password. Please try the steps again, unlock the keychain and try this step again, or get a non-empty password if necessary.
- (11) Lock the Keychain (either via the control strip, or open the Control Panel and lock it).
- (12) Launch the Keychain Autounlock application (make sure you have version 1.1.1). Enter your password... did you get an error message? If so, your password is not correct, or it could not be unlocked for some reason. Repeat earlier steps if you did not get a "The keychain information was saved..." dialog.
- (13) If you do not want to mount servers on startup, you are done. Continue to use your mac, and from now on on restart the keychain should be unlocked for you.
- (14) If you do want to mount servers automatically on startup, open the System Folder, and create a folder named "Startup Servers" inside. Put aliases to any servers you wish to mount on startup in this folder. DO NOT PUT SERVER ALIASES IN THE STARTUP ITEMS FOLDER. This will NOT work... the Finder will attempt to open those server aliases BEFORE Keychain Autounlock has a chance to run, therefore defeating the purpose of using it (Also a bug in my opinion).
- (15) Restart, and you should be ready to go -- all servers properly aliased in the "Startup Servers" folder should be automatically mounted.

### **Is It Secure?**

The preferences (and your password) are scrambled, so prying eyes cannot decipher your password via the prefs file. This gives this method of unlocking your password has a distinct advantage over other automatic utilities or methods.

### **How Much Is It?**

Free! All that we ask is that you check out our other software, available at:  
<http://www.chaoticsoftware.com>

If you want to see further enhancements to this product, please e-mail us at [support@chaoticsoftware.com](mailto:support@chaoticsoftware.com)

### **What Else Does Chaotic Software Offer?**

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FlavorSavers • The ultimate iMac screensaver. \$20 Shareware  
MacArmyKnife • The swiss army knife of Macintosh utilities. \$20 Shareware  
File Manipulator • The ultimate file manipulation utility. \$20 Shareware  
MP3 Rage • An essential utility for any MP3 user. \$24.95 Single User License  
Nag • A flexible personal scheduling application. \$10 Shareware  
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